

CADW/ICOMOS REGISTER OF PARKS AND GARDENS  
OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST IN WALES

SITE DOSSIER

**SITE NAME** Moynes Court

**REF. NO.** PGW (Gt) 34

OS MAP 162 GRID REF. ST 520909

FORMER COUNTY Gwent UNITARY AUTHORITY Monmouth B.C. COMMUNITY  
COUNCIL Mathern

DESIGNATIONS Listed building: Moynes Court Grade II\*  
Gatehouse at Moynes Court: II

National Park AONB SSSI NNR ESA GAM SAM CA (Mathern)

SITE EVALUATION Grade II

Primary reasons for grading

Survival of structure of Tudor walled garden, with medieval fishpond

TYPE OF SITE

walled garden; fishpond

MAIN PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION

16th century

VISITED BY/DATE Elisabeth Whittle/May 1991

## HOUSE

Name Moynes Court

Grid ref ST 520909

Date/style 16th century/Tudor

### Brief description

Moynes Court is a three-storey stone house situated on a slight ridge to the E of St Pierre Park, SW of Chepstow. It is of medieval origin, first mentioned in a survey of Wentwood of 1271, which mentioned Bogode Knovill as the owner of a mansion here. In 1307 an Inquisition Post Mortem listed a capital messuage with a garden and pigeon house, worth 20s a year. The house was largely rebuilt, probably by the Morgan family in the late 16th century, with a symmetrical facade on the SE side. The core of the house is probably older, and the very tall gatehouse to the SE certainly is; it is thought to be late 13th-century in date. In 1608 Bishop Godwin of Llandaff bought Moynes Court, and there is a heraldic panel over the front door with his coat of arms and the date 1609. Ownership subsequently passed through several families, and in 1826 came to the Lewises of St Pierre. Externally the house is little changed since its alteration in the 16th century, and the gatehouse is complete and unchanged.

## OUTBUILDINGS

Name Various outbuildings

Grid ref ST 520909

Date/style, and brief description

To the SW is a large medieval stone barn in poor condition  
To the NW is a range of single-storey outbuildings of later date than the house, now converted to a house.

## THE PLEASURE GARDEN

Grid ref ST 520909

Date/style 16th century/walled, formal

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION, HISTORY AND LAYOUT

The gardens of Moynes Court lie to the NW, NE and SE of the house (now in three separate ownerships). To the NE is a rectangular walled area between the gatehouse and the house, with a central paved path between the two. To the SE is a square walled garden with perimeter and central paths, and a 17th- or 18th-century stone sundial in the centre. All walls are high and of stone, mostly standing to their full height. To the NW is an open area of garden on a steep slope, at the bottom of which is a rectilinear pond. The gardens are largely laid out to lawns, with perimeter borders and a few specimen trees. No planting is earlier than the 20th century, but a few of the ornamental trees in the SE garden are known to have been planted in the 1930s and 1940s, including a Judas tree. A fine Tulip tree and wisteria in this garden were planted in 1957.

The earliest part of the garden is probably the fishpond in the small valley to the NW, which is probably medieval in origin. A garden at Moynes Court is mentioned in several Inquisitions Post Mortem in the medieval period: in 1307 the I.P.M. (Ch. Ed.I, File 131, no. 11) of Bogo de Knovill mentions a garden and pigeon house, as well as water mills etc., and in 1340 an I.P.M. mentions a garden worth 3s. 4d. a year beyond outgoings (14 Ed. III, File 62).

The surviving walled gardens are likely to be of the same date as the alterations to the house in the late 16th century. A map of 1669 by George Goode shows the approach from the NE along a tree-lined drive, the house and gatehouse, and a walled garden to the SE of the house, where the present-day walled garden is. The garden's layout is shown schematically.

### STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

The house and gardens are approached from the NE along a narrow road, originally the private drive.

Both walled gardens are levelled (on more or less level ground). That between the house and gatehouse has a central stone flagged path running between the two, and another beside the gatehouse. The garden to the SE also has stone flagged paths down the centre (running NW-SE), and along the SE and NW sides. Along the NE wall the path is concrete.

At the foot of the slope to the NW of the house is a rectilinear pond (orientated NE-SW), which is shown on the 1669 map.

### BUILT COMPONENTS

The gardens to the NE and SE of the house are surrounded by high stone walls, which mostly stand to their full height. On the NW and SE sides of the NE garden (between gatehouse and house) they are about 2 m. high, with doorways in them next to the house. The SE garden is surrounded by stone walls on all but the house side. These appear to stand to their full height, and are c. 2.2 m. high except for the NE wall which is slightly lower. At the SW end of the stone path along the house is a doorway.

### ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS

In the centre of the SE garden is a sundial on a stone pedestal (17th or 18th-century).

Standing next to the house door in the SE garden is a stone holy water stoup removed some time ago from Runston chapel (Crick).

#### PLANTED COMPONENTS

The NW area of the garden is largely lawn, with a few specimen shrubs and trees.

The NE garden is largely lawn, with herbaceous borders against the walls. Most plants planted by present owners.

The SE garden is laid out largely as lawn, with specimen trees (including a Judas tree - *Cercis silaquastrum*, and Tulip tree). The Judas tree was planted by the previous owners (Mr and Mrs Herbert) in the 1930s or 40s, and the Tulip tree and wisteria were planted in 1957 by the present owner. Overgrown herbaceous borders around the edge of the garden, with traces of dwarf box edging along the perimeter paths.

Mature deciduous trees (mainly chestnuts, alternating red and white flowered) flank the approach road.

#### Reconstructions of original planted features

None

#### Special collections of garden plants

None

#### Documented living plants

None

#### Other (including elements of nature conservation interest)

None

#### ESSENTIAL SETTING AND VIEWS BEYOND THE SITE

Not applicable

#### ANY SPECIAL FEATURES

None

#### SURVIVAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Structural components: all

Built components: all

Architectural ornaments: some

Planted components: none

## SOURCES

(Primary and secondary. For primary, give location. Aerial photos (AP): ref. no and collection)

### Primary

National Library of Wales:

? early 20th-century: photo of house, garden, sundial and gatehouse (Cas-Gwent Photo file)

1839 watercolour of house and gatehouse (Mon B "M" PG 192)

1886 pencil and wash drawing by Patty Harding of the gateway (Drawings vol 209 f4, 5)

1831 anon. pen and chalk drawing of gatehouse (Drawings vol 399 f 21)

Gwent Record Office:

1669 reproduction of part of Moynes Court estate (Misc mss 896)

### Secondary

J.G. Wood, *Moynes Court Monmouthshire* (Newport, 1914).

To be appended: 1:10,000 map of site, marked with boundaries, viewpoints etc.; colour photographs of site, photocopies of relevant material, where available.

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